

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW  
OF DAVID SONNER  
BY A.V. SHIRK  
APRIL 23 and 24, 2016

Q. This is A.V. Shirk speaking. It is April 23, 2016. I am at 77 Orchard Street, Oberlin, Ohio, interviewing David Sonner. The genesis of this came about, oh, a year or so ago I suppose, when Tom Ryland, the General Manager of WOSU, contacted me. He wanted information about WOSU back at the time we worked there. When did you come to work there?

A. September 1960.

Q. Aha! And you worked there how long?

A. Until September, or the end of August, 1964.

Q. How do you remember that? I can't remember when I came. I know my wife Sonny was pregnant, so it was sometime in 1960. I remember Keith was born that year. And financial records that I have indicated that I left in 1965, but I sure don't remember the dates.

A. I'm assisted in that part of the memory, that recollection, maybe it was later than the first of September, because I had been discharged from the Army in early September. And at your suggestion, I applied to work at WOSU. And one of the things that was required was that I had to go take a typing test. And I did that in a state office building someplace in Columbus. And I must have passed the typing test because I started working, I'll say now, late September. And I remember my departure, because it occurred subsequent to the embroil about your rascally, subversive, production of...

Q. "Songs of Protest and Politics."

- A. Yeah, I never remember the, "...And Politics" part. And [U.S.] Sen. [John] Bricker, among other people, and Trustee of Ohio State University, didn't like your series. He was a dough head in many ways.
- Q. I don't remember Senator Bricker. I remember [U.S.] Rep. [John] Ashbrook.
- A. Bricker was a Trustee.
- Q. Yeah, I know, but I don't remember him being involved. Tom Ryland sent me an e-mail and said, "I would like to know more about the personalities of the station during the time period, the programming, relationship with OSU, who was in charge, what were the biggest challenges and accomplishments during the period you worked at the station, and please make sure to get exactly the time period that he worked there," which we seemed to have done. "And see if he might have some work photos." I don't think you do, do you? I have photographs here.
- A. Let me finish how it is that I know the time that I left WOSU. Your production of "Songs of Protest and Politics," caused quite a stir. [Note: Researchers also can access an oral history interview conducted with A.V. Shirk at <http://kb.osu.edu/dspace/handle/1811/56913>). You and Fred Calland were, I'll put it this way, called in for reprimand. Did you have to go talk with [OSU Telecommunications Center Director] Richard Hull?
- Q. No. No, I never did.
- A. But Fred did. As a consequence, in the summer of 1964, you were no longer there, and either Fred was about to be discharged, and I was, too. We had yearly contracts as you may remember. And my contract expired at the end of either August or September 1964. And that was that. And in the summer of 1964, I was married with one wife and two

children, and I was confronted with the need to find other employment. That circumstance is very vivid in my recollection. So August or September 1964, I no longer was at WOSU.

Q. Okay. Do you remember the personnel? The manager was Don Quail.

A. At that time, yeah.

Q. Assistant manager was Bob Schweikart.

A. Oh Quail was never there, because he was at the TV station?

Q. No.

A. Schweikart was the manager, I thought.

Q. No, Don Quail was the manager. Bob Schweikart was the assistant manager.

A. We had a change of managers in the time I was there.

Q. Yes. So Schweikart may have been promoted. But when I went there [Quail was manager].

A. Yes, when you went there. Don Quail went to Boston.

Q. And then Bob Schweikart. Do you remember when Quail went to Boston?

A. Before I arrived, which meant the last quarter. He must have gone before September 1960.

Q. Boy, oh, boy, I remember him being there longer than that. Ohhh boy.

A. I'm going to help your memory quite a bit here.

Q. Yeah. Or confuse the issue. Okay. The secretary was Gloria Hines.

A. When I arrived, I don't think it was.

Q. I think she came later, yeah. And there was that young woman who worked with Gloria in the same office. Do you remember her name?

- A. I do not remember her name, but I do remember a young woman.
- Q. I've got a picture of her here.
- A. And her name was Mary Katherine Eastman.
- Q. That's it.
- A. She came there, I thought after ... There was a red-headed older woman who followed Mary K. Eastman. Eastman was from Mt. Vernon, Ohio, who married Ken Willison<sup>1</sup>.
- Q. Yeah, there she is right there.
- A. Indeed, she is.
- Q. Okay, so we are talking about the same person.
- A. She sat at the reception desk. If you came in the front door, straight ahead, and in front of a giant window there was a desk. And Mary K. Eastman sat there. There was somebody who, in my recollection, preceded her. She showed up and then sometime later, as I said, a red-headed, much older woman than Mary Kathryn, I can't remember her name.
- Q. The Continuity Department was right across from the Music Department.
- A. Olive Haynes.
- Q. Olive Haynes and Diana Zimmer, before she married Fred Calland. Do you have any idea how that operation worked, what they actually did?
- A. They had a great time. They were in there laughing all the time. But no, I don't remember what they did. It must have been important because, as we know, continuity in all things is useful. Let me guess that aside from the music programs that came in on tape and recording, the French series was on recording. They were played once, or twice, and then they just stacked up.

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<sup>1</sup> Shirk note: A friend of Sonner's and an acquaintance of Shirk's.

- Q. Now you're talking about French language instruction? Because I remember Fred and Ilse Edse, the German language instruction.
- A. Well, this was a pre-packaged one, from France. "French in the Air." It was a wonderful program. Anyhow, I think what they did was select programming and order it, make it available. That was one thing they did. Continuity would, I'm just making this up, kind of as I go along, the idea of continuity is that they would schedule things and see that they fit into the schedule.
- Q. Well, now that you mention it, I remember we got a lot of music programs that were pre-recorded. Salzburg Festival, a lot of European festival things.
- A. Something from the Netherlands.
- Q. Yeah, there was. A lot of other shows that came in, I think from the NAEB, National Association of Radio Broadcasters. No, NAEB, the National Association of Educational Broadcasters, which was sort of a pre-NPR network, which consisted of shows that were sent through the mail on tape. Recorded on tape, and the tape recordings were sent from station to station, or... Well, we got them in the mail I know, and they were, I suppose, given to Continuity to be put in. I don't remember that Fred and I did much with those things directly.
- A. Oh, I do.
- Q. Do you?
- A. Fred supervised all of that stuff.
- Q. He did? Okay, go ahead.
- A. I remember him searching for things in his office...
- Q. I can remember that.

- A. ...which was a frequent event. Well, I will try to think of some of the other series because, while you named two, there were certainly more.
- Q. There were a lot more. I remember on one or two occasions there was some anxiety because a taped program that had been scheduled, and was in the program schedule, had not arrived, even though the broadcast time was approaching. I don't recall one ever not coming in. But I remember one or two coming in pretty late, late enough to cause anxiety.
- A. Well, that memory escapes me. Of course, it wasn't my direct immediate responsibility. You and Fred got to stew about that.
- Q. No, it seems to me that all of them worried about that. Well, I mean, Fred was concerned, of course, but it was Olive's responsibility to fill in or do something if the show didn't... Now, she and Fred, if something like that had happened, she and Fred would have probably worked to fill it in. Fifty-year-old memories, more than that now.
- A. Fifteen?
- Q. Fifty.
- A. Fifty, yes.
- Q. Now we also had a News Department.
- A. Didn't we ever.
- Q. Who was in that?
- A. Don Davis, who had worked for years to build his voice to an authoritative level. And Larry...
- Q. Larry Carter.

- A. ...Larry Carter. I associate him with the program Meridian, at noon time. It was news and what the NBC fellow, Pat, who was in charge of production at NBC Radio for a time. Anyhow, somebody dubbed those kind of programs, labeled those kind of programs as, “news magazines”. And that’s what Meridian was. Who did the farm report?
- Q. Oh, my God.
- A. That was a necessary feature, it went out all over the state to the farming communities.
- Q. That’s right.
- A. And who was the young woman from the... home economics, um?
- Q. Oh yes.
- A. And asparagus is a good buy.
- Q. Good buy. And a “goodbye” for you is, and then she’d mention whatever she thought was good.<sup>2</sup> That was essentially home economics, how to buy well, how to run your household, stuff like that, the best I can remember. And I can’t remember her name either. Yeah, Don Davis was in charge of news. Who worked with him? There were one or two other people over there?
- A. All I can pull out of the memory thicket is Larry, and I couldn’t remember his name until you said Carter. Larry Carter. It might seep to the surface here now.
- Q. What other announcers were there? There was Larry Carter.
- A. There were announcers after announcer. Richard, a young fellow with a wonderful quiet, thunder voice. Richard. Then there was a bald-headed Russian fellow. I think for some reason or another, I think he had a Russian name. And he lives in my memory as the person who was annoyed about something, and so maybe just feeling a little frisky and he

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<sup>2</sup> Shirk note: She would sign off her program by saying, “(whatever) is a good buy; and a goodbye for you is (whatever).”

said, “The late madam Wanda Landowska [a well-known harpsichordist],” and he also said, “The penis of Rome.”<sup>3</sup> He was a staff announcer. He also did some news reporting. Everybody did everything. Who was the theatrical producer?

Q. I don’t know.

A. A chubby fellow. He’d say, “Come on, we’re doing this show and I need somebody to play Uncle Fritz.” Or, “I need somebody to play ...”

Q. Yeah, I got roped into one or two of those things occasionally.

A. I can’t remember his name but it was a regular feature. That’s all he did at the station, was he’d come in when it was time to put on a radio play.

Q. Yeah, he’d go through the staff and recruit us to read lines or something. Engineers. Al Boggioni.

A. That’s the name I couldn’t remember. And I remember, so I was there a few months, there I am laboring away in this office stuffed with records. Vinyl discs. And there’s a crisis. Something’s happened. And there wasn’t anybody around to broadcast, to say to the listeners, “Well, we’ve had some terrible screw-up here. And, we’re going to try to fudge our way through.” So I was called on to say something over the air. And I used the phrase, “Technical difficulty.” Al, when he heard that or heard about it, went berserk.

Q He did?

A [Boggioni said] “God damn it, it wasn’t a technical difficulty. It was from the production people. Nothing to do with a technical matter.” And he didn’t come directly to me, but I could still feel his wrath as was reflected, projected by whoever it was that was telling me

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<sup>3</sup> Shirk note: A deliberate mispronunciation of Respighi’s “The Pines of Rome”.



that that was a terrible mistake. “Well, gee whiz, I’m just a rookie.” So I was properly reprimanded.

Q. I can remember Boggioni telling me that they would do certain tests to make sure the equipment was broadcasting properly, when the station was silent. You know, there would be brief periods of silence, when nothing was being broadcast for a few seconds.<sup>4</sup> And he could use that to make sure that the station was broadcasting clean without noise and what not. And he mentioned that there was another station in town, and the production manager insisted there *never* be any silence. I think he wanted to make sure that if anyone was just scanning the dial, that they wouldn’t hit his frequency and not realize there was a station there. So he wanted to make sure something was being broadcast all the time. But the Engineering Department had no way of checking the broadcast to make sure they were clean.

A. Somebody in the station could be listening and say, “We’re screeching here, gang, we’ve got to do something.”

Q. Well, anyway.

A. All right.

Q. Who else? Al was Chief Engineer. Bill Parks was his second in line, wasn’t he?

A. I never had that hierarchy. Bill Parks was so, tired word, unique. He was so remarkably himself, that I never thought him as subordinate to anybody.

Q. Yeah, he did live in a world of his own.

A. But he shared it with us.

Q. Yes, he did.

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<sup>4</sup> Shirk note: An example of this, of course, would be the pause between the movements of a classical composition.

- A. Most of the time it was fun. I don't have anything other than... I think of him, I smile. And we are, of course, going to get to the Rubber Ducky...hangin' over the edge of the....
- Q. You remember that, too?
- A. Oh, remember it? Yes.
- Q. Well, I think I've told Tom about it. Tell me your version.
- A. I don't know what prompted all of this.
- Q. Oh, I think I do. But go ahead.
- A. Well, what I remember is that Schweikart, came into his office...
- Q. No, no, what happened was, when you walked inside WOSU, through the main entrance into the lobby, at some point there was a big 50-gallon drum, and it was supposed to be, I think we were supposed to put in books or something for some charitable cause. And people wound up tossing trash and other stuff into it. And Bob Schweikart sent out a memo saying, "Don't abuse this collection device." And that's when he walked into his office one day and that 50-gallon drum was up on a bookcase. Is that the way you remember it?
- A. It was propped up some way or another.
- Q. These offices had very high ceilings.
- A. Yes, they did. Befitting a former airplane hangar.

- Q. It was supposed to be an old World War I airplane hangar, and so the ceilings were way the hell up there. And he walked in and there was this 50-gallon drum full of water, propped up on a bookcase or something near the ceiling<sup>5</sup>, with rubber ducks.
- A. It wasn't full of water.
- Q. It was.
- A. I was always told it wasn't.
- Q. No, wait, wait. It was. And he didn't know what to do about it. And Fred Calland came in and siphoned it out the window. And Don Quail then sent out a memo that said in effect, "Stop picking on Bob Schweikart." And then Quail went in his office, there was the drum up there, and the duck over the edge of it, and then all of a sudden there was this crash as this drum, empty, fell down to the floor, because it wasn't secured very well. And the little duck had been attached by a spring.
- A. I remember that as being a Schweikart event, not Don Quail.
- Q. The first one with water with Schweikart, then when Quail sent out the memo Quail got the drum.
- A. Schweikart was the one that pulled or was there on the scene. I can remember Gloria being highly amused by all this, even though it could have ended with death and destruction.
- Q. Now, wait a minute. The first one or the second one? The first one with water or the second one without water?

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<sup>5</sup> Shirk note: I have this wrong. There were two 50-gallon drum incidents. On the first one, the drum was on Schweikart's desk, full of water, with the rubber duck floating on top. On the second one, the empty drum was on the Station Manager's bookcase, with the rubber duck attached by a spring, peeking over the edge.

- A. I don't remember Quail having anything to do with this. Schweikart, the thing was in his office, it came down. He did something to make it come down and he was in his operetta character way, was fit to be tied, as they say. So our memories are at variance here.
- Q. Oh, dear. I like my story better. I'm going to go with it.
- A. And I remember that there was something more to it. It had more stages, more events to it. There was this that happened and officialdom went berserk, and then something else happened. Bill Parks didn't let it go until Bob Schweikart was almost killed by this thing coming down. I mean, a 55-gallon drum coming, falling from 8 or 10 feet in the air to the floor, could be very damaging to anything alive. Well, yes, that is one of my chief memories, even though I don't have it necessarily in complete and with all the characters.
- Q. If I were smart, I would take this recording and re-edit so that between the two of us we could come up with a coherent story.
- A. I think it's important to realize that it's not going to be a flawlessly set-out recollection.
- Q. I know obviously it's not. I was kidding. Anyway...
- A. Do you remember the, "these little fuck-ups will occur"?
- Q. Yeah. Gosh, yes. I certainly do. Do you remember to whom it was sent?
- A. No, it was just somebody who wrote in and complained about something.
- Q. No, no. It was one of those recordings that almost didn't make it.
- A. Oh really?
- Q. You know, I'm not sure of that. It wasn't a listener. It was the NAEP, I think, or some other official organization.
- A. This is even better.

- Q. What had happened was there was some confusion that had finally been resolved. And I think it was either a recording that had almost not arrived on time, or the wrong recording had been shipped. And the replacement was shipped on time. And the letter went back to tell them everything worked out alright, there was no problem, and it wound up with, “we understand how these problems sometimes occur. Sincerely yours, Don Quail, etc. etc.” Whatever it was.
- A. Schweikart.
- Q. Schweikart, OK. Anyway, two copies of the letter were typed out; the one that went out in the mail; and the carbon copy, another clean copy, was typed, with a carbon, to produce a carbon copy, and that one went to Quail’s office. And that one, that last...
- A. Schweikart. Schweikart.
- Q. I thought it was from Schweikart.
- A. Yes, it was, but he got the carbon copy.
- Q. Well, he would have seen the original.
- A. No, because that was Gloria’s scampiness.
- Q. Yeah, I know, but from whom did the letter go out?
- A. It went out from Schweikart.
- Q. Okay, this isn’t making sense. If the letter went out from Schweikart, he would have seen the original.
- A. No, he wouldn’t have, because Gloria didn’t give him that.
- Q. Well, who signed the letter from him?
- A. I see what your problem is, but here’s what happened, A.V. Gloria, who fully deserves the appellation, glorious, was glorious in her mischief. And Schweikart was, I described

him as a character from an operetta, he was very fussy, and officious, and sort of pumped up. He was a congenial, friendly, nice person.

Q. Yeah, he was.

A. He was also so officious and easily rattled. And she was merciless. But no, maybe she was probably merciful in that she didn't do things that she might have, to set him off. But this was one of them. And my memory tells me, she handed him a stack of carbon copies after putting together the fake one. She slipped that in there and kept the other carbon copy, and waited for him to collapse on the floor screaming and kicking. Then she would give him the real letter. I can't account for...sure, he probably had a whole bunch of letters. She gave him the letters to sign. He signed them all, and then she gave him the carbon copy.

Q. Which he wouldn't bother to read if he had already read the original.

A. Whatever happened. He read something. And, he exploded in anger and in despair, that such a thing would be sent out over his signature.

Q. We haven't told them what...

A. [The fake letter said,] "These little fuck-ups will occur."

Q. Yeah, well anyway the last sentence which said, "We understand how these mistakes sometimes occur," or something to that effect, was retyped for the carbon to read, "We understand how these fuck-ups occasionally occur," or something like that. And I thought that was given to Quail for his amusement and amazement.

A. He was not there.

Q. All right.

A. There were three offices.

- Q. I'm going to have to abandon any plan of re-editing this, because there's no possibility I could put it in coherent form. Okay. Who was in charge? Let's see if we can get that settled? When you came, who was the manager?
- A. Schweikart.
- Q. Schweikart was the manager?
- A. Schweikart, 1960. September or so of 1960. I don't know how long it took me to process being hired.
- Q. Okay, well this makes some sense then, because if Schweikart was the manager, the letter we were talking about, was probably signed by somebody else in Continuity maybe. That would make sense. And then the carbon given to Schweikart. But...
- A. Whatever. He was the patsy.
- Q. Okay, I'll buy that. So you remember Schweikart being in charge the entire time?
- A. Yes, and I remember how despondent, but proud, the staff was that Quail had been taken to the pinnacle of the profession to WGBH in Boston.
- Q. Hmm, OK. "What were the biggest challenges and accomplishments during the period you worked at the station?" Challenges and accomplishments. Well, from my point of view the biggest challenge was getting the damn program schedule out on time.
- A. Oh, the monthly bulletin?
- Q. Yeah.
- A. I got to watch that struggle.
- Q. I was in it.

- A. Yes, I know you were. You and Fred, and Fred would put off, put off getting it, couldn't find things, and I don't think he ever turned in a bulletin two days early, a week early, I don't think it ever happened.
- Q. It always went out late, every time that I was there. And, after a while, I noticed that it was always the same amount of time late.<sup>6</sup>
- A. Really?
- Q. It was five days late or four days late, something. I don't remember. But after a while I would notice that we all always get this thing in four days late to the composers who have to set it up. And it occurred to me, if we can always do it four days late, we can always do it on time. What's going on here?
- A. That's a wonderful understanding of how the particular person we're talking about, how he functioned. Fred had to create a crisis for himself to make things happen. It was a marvel. Smoked, smoked, smoked, drank coffee. Stayed up. He must have regularly, when the thing was due and overdue, been up 48 hours at a time. And then he would crash, and you wouldn't see him for a couple of days. And then it would start all over again. Ah, well. We're trying to think of names of people. Well, Richard Knudd was in Engineering.
- Q. Yeah, he was an engineer. So we had Sheldon Auerbach in Engineering.
- A. That's good! What I put was burly Jew.
- Q. Sheldon Auerbach. Yeah, he was in Engineering. And Richard Knudd, who was in my high school class. I can't remember the names of any of the other engineers.

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<sup>6</sup> Shirk note: My wife, Debora Bittaker, who is an editor, tells me that we were **not** getting things in late on a regular basis. It wouldn't have taken long for the printers to recognize the pattern and adjust for it. "Your compositor knew how to set deadlines!" she told me. She is probably right. I do not remember the monthly bulletin ever being mailed out late.



- A. I can't either. I can see a face.
- Q. Oh! I know one thing, did WOSU AM and FM broadcast the same programs?
- A. Yes.
- Q. My recollection is AM and FM broadcast the same.
- A. Right. WOSU Radio, AM and FM. Something, something, something on your dial. What was it?
- Q. 89.5. No, 820 on AM and 89.7 FM.
- A. Yes, good. 820.
- Q. 820
- A. And was it 5,000 watts?
- Q. Oh, God, I have no idea.
- A. Well, it covered a good part of the state.
- Q. Oh it certainly did. Driving back from Cleveland, I could get WOSU, sometimes I would just set it on WOSU, set the radio on WOSU, and just wait and see how long it took before it picked it up. Three-quarters of the way to Cleveland, I guess, something like that.
- A. All right, what else are we supposed to be coming up with?
- Q. Challenges and accomplishments.
- A. I did a couple of programs, one on real estate called, "House Hunting," and another one called, rather pompously, "Panoply."
- Q. Oh, I remember that, yes.
- A. Interviews with foreign students.
- Q. Do you remember how you got to do that?

- A. I asked. I said, “Here’s the program idea.” Now that you ask me how that came about, I think I had to prepare, on a form, a program proposal, just as I did for “House Hunting.” And they went for it. “Give the kid something to do.”
- Q. You turned in a sample program or something?
- A. No, I just made a proposal, wrote a proposal.
- Q. Wrote a proposal? I don’t remember, I have no recollection of how I happened to do my first show. Then after that I just did them and broadcast them.
- A. I am not entirely sure that a proposal was required. But...
- Q. Formally, you mean?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Well, you had to go to somebody, because you needed the time slot.
- A. There was a taped program about organ works. Do you remember that? Anyhow, they could have just thrown that out and substituted my commentary about real estate.
- Q. I do remember, they had “Morning Meditations” ...
- A. Oh, yeah.
- Q. ...which was religious commentary of one (sic) kind. And I went to Bob Schweikart and said, “You know, what about agnostics and atheists? Shouldn’t they have their voices heard?” And Bob said, “Ah, umm.” That’s about it. He could hardly tell me I was wrong, but he wasn’t about to do it, either. What else did you do? You went...
- A. To Mississippi.
- Q. You went to Mississippi, yes.
- A. And I don’t quite remember what the origins of that idea could have been, except that I was inspired by The Petal Paper [whose editor and publisher was] P.D. East.

- Q. P.D. East, in Petal, Mississippi. Except he wasn't.
- A. Except he wasn't?
- Q. Wasn't he in a nearby town?
- A. Yeah, Hattiesburg.
- Q. Yeah.
- A. Or, maybe it was Jackson.
- Q. We better get some background here.
- A. Yeah.
- Q. P.D. East published a newspaper called The Petal Paper, out of Petal, P-E-T-A-L, Mississippi, which was an anti-segregation publication.
- A. Where that could get you killed.
- Q. Well, yes, in the 1960s. I don't know how much he actually did for the cause of segregation in Mississippi, but he attracted a lot of nationwide attention. Steve Allen advertised big in his paper as I recall.<sup>7</sup> And you went down to interview him, didn't you?
- A. I did. I had a Ford Escort, before I knew it was the car of choice of the Argentine police and secret agent bunch, to pick up dissidents and take them off and do bad things to them. That was not until years later. Anyhow, I had, I think it was a 1962 Ford Escort. And I made this proposal to, I suppose, Don Davis. Desegregation efforts and resegregation efforts were at a pitch in the early '60s. Went on to a higher pitch of ferocity. And P.D. East was bucking the trend.
- Q. Boy, he was.

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<sup>7</sup> Shirk note: I remember seeing a full-page ad in the Petal Paper for Steve Allen's book, "Mark It and Strike It".

A. And A.V. and I had come upon his work and one or the other or both of us subscribed to the newspaper.

Q I did.

A Did you?

Q Oh, sure.

A I still have copies here and there.

Q. I think I've got one or two kicking around.

A. And I don't know how I persuaded whoever it was I had to persuade, but I got a tape recorder, which I did not know...

Q The Magnacord. That big Magnacord.

A ...that I did not know, as it turned out, how to operate very well. And P.D. East had to rescue me from my ineptitude.

Q. That thing weighed 40 pounds!

A. Well, I was better able to haul that around than I am now. So I drove, and I drove, and I drove. I think I stopped in Berea, Kentucky, because that was a beacon of good sense below the Mason Dixon Line. And I drove there.

Q. Now wait a minute, let's go back a step. Who was paying for this? Were you paying for this?

A. Oh no, this was all...I don't know who paid for the gas, I don't remember that. I don't know who paid for the lodging, now that you mention it. I don't know whether, I probably would have remembered if I had to sleep in the car because the car was too damn little. I don't remember that. What I do remember is when I got there, P.D. East, and his very stylish girlfriend, and I gathered someplace for several hours, and I'm not

sure whether it lasted more than one day or not, I mumbled through an interview. And it was many hours. You have the box.<sup>8</sup> That's more than 20 minutes.

Q. Well, yeah, I mean I've got a half an hour...<sup>9</sup>

A. That weighs 40 pounds, the box of tapes. All right, so.

Q. Well, you haven't talked about East much.

A. Well, all I can tell you is, he was fun to be with. I don't remember anything that was said back and forth between us. It's all, my memory I deposited in those tapes. And somebody will have to discover what there is there, because I haven't played them. When was that, '62? A long time ago, and I don't remember. So A.V., I hope that you can provide me with something I can listen to.

Q. Well, we'll take a look at the tapes and see what condition they're in after all this time.

A I'm told after a while they fuse together.

Q. That's not usually what happens. What usually happens is that the magnetic deposit on the backing begins to come off.

A. Just turns into dust.

Q. They could fuse together. Well, we'll find out. Okay, so what other shows did you do?

A. I don't remember except that it seems to me that there were many times that I did the...Oh yeah, jeez, I was pressed into service to do the Saturday pre-game marching band show. Not the Ohio State Marching Band, but it could be bands from Russia or just band music. Hoop-D-Doo, and Marshall, and one time, I'm so embarrassed to remark on this, I said in a flippant aside, "Anybody who could identify this tune, gets two free

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<sup>8</sup> Shirk note: The box containing the tapes of the P.D. East recordings, that David gave to me.

<sup>9</sup> Shirk note: I'm not sure what I meant here. I think I was referring to the fact that a standard 1,200 foot reel-to-reel tape, at 7 ½ inches per second, would store a half hour of recorded sound.

tickets to the big game.” (Imitates sound of phone ringing “Brrrrrrrr.”) The phones, what few phones we had, instantly, and I answered them, made the mistake of answering one and the conversation did not end well.

Q. My god! Did they identify it correctly?

A. Why sure, it was the Ohio State Fight Song.

Q Oh!... (laughter)

A. Fred, and the WOSU system, was very forgiving and had a lot of room for bumbling and incompetence, and very forgiving. And for people who had sour attitudes – I told you about the announcer and the “Penis of Rome.” He did that because he was annoyed with something going on within the station. And he was getting back at somebody. And, A.V., we were not tied to a 9-5. We did not make it a habit of showing up strictly at an appointed time and leaving then after eight hours. I went to school. I was back and forth from WOSU to classes. It was one of the appeals of working there. And Fred’s schedule was irregular and you had a new baby and you weren’t always there on a schedule<sup>10</sup>.

Q. I took a lot of work home, too.

A. Did you hear that, Tom? Okay. So it was a fun place to work. That’s one of the chief takeaways.

Q. Speaking of which, I would just go and take whatever I needed home. There was no checking it out or anything. Any materials I needed for whatever I was doing, if I was going to do the work at home, I just took the stuff home with me. I did my regular job, the assignment, the music scheduling, making sure the stuff you were doing, and the stuff that you took over, and then I worked with Fred on programming. As long as I got my

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<sup>10</sup> Shirk note: My wife, Sunny, was not working at the time. So, the birth of our son, Keith, had little or no effect on my schedule.

regular work done, I could do pretty much anything else I wanted. And I would often take stuff home and just do it on my own time.<sup>11</sup> But there was no checking out of the material. I just grabbed what I wanted, put it under my arm, and walked out with it. And brought it back.

A. I think the upper management, the people who were lodged at the television station, thought of the personnel at WOSU Radio, as being a rather loose, the term hippies had started to show up.

Q. That was later. That was later.<sup>12</sup>

A. I have an article about Larry's Bar and Grill from that time, about Larry's Bar and Grill.

Q. You may be right, you may be right.

A. In any case, and maybe this is just my projection that's bounced back to me, my projection of how I thought we would be assessed by others, that it was kind of a happy-go-lucky band of high-spirited, playful, intelligent, and creative, but not very well regimented. And that Richard Hull was on edge about WOSU Radio.

Q. Do you remember the barbeque in front, when they were doing construction work?

A. No, I don't remember that.

Q. They were doing road work.

A. Yes, they were.

Q. And there was this big trench out there. And somebody brought in some charcoal briquettes, and a grill or something. And we just built a charcoal fire in one of those trenches.

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<sup>11</sup> Shirk note: There are photographs of me doing just that; copies of which I have given to the OSU Archives.

<sup>12</sup> Shirk note: This is something difficult, if not impossible to establish. But I still do not think the term "hippie" was in common use in Columbus until the late '60s—early '70s.

- A. Do you remember that you would take vinyl records across the street to let them bask in the sun so that they would straighten out because they were warped?
- Q. No, I don't remember that. But I remember this thing, this barbeque, got on the front page. It got in The Lantern. And I think it was on the front page, but hell I don't remember now.
- A. A.V., you've got to remember that. [You took the records out into the sunlight] so that they would stop being warped.
- Q. No, I don't remember it.
- A. It was right out, directly across the street.
- Q. I would do this?
- A. Yeah. You probably learned it from Fred.
- Q. Oh, I'm sure I did. I learned a lot from him.
- A. Yes.
- Q. In the sleeves? Or just...
- A. I don't remember that. Let's hope they were in the sleeves.
- Q. I don't know.
- A. Melt the grooves. Accomplishments.
- Q. Yeah, challenges and accomplishments.
- A. We put out a splendid array of good broadcasting, wonderful music, and thoughtful commentaries. And we didn't have ads.
- Q. We didn't have fund raising either. Now Bill Parks did a couple of shows. He did a nice one on Jelly Roll Morton. I mean, anybody could do a show and as long as it met certain standards...



A. And those standards were elastic and embracing. They took in a lot of the human experience, in the content and in the presentation you wouldn't find anywhere else.

Q. Well...

A. We ought to give this another shot after we've had time to think of more monumental achievements, so that we can sound as if this was a marvelous episode on broadcasting, because it was. All right, we'll pick this up later.

Q. Okay.

Q. This is AV Shirk speaking. It is April 24, 2016. This is a continuation of an interview with David Sonner, at 77 Orchard Street, Oberlin, Ohio, about WOSU in the 1960s. You were asking me a minute ago about Diana Zimmer.

A. Yes, I was. Because Fred Calland and Diana Zimmer married sometime after I left.

Q. It was after you left?

A. Yes. And more than a little bit, as I recall. We were also talking about when it was and why it was that Fred Calland left.<sup>13</sup> And what I'm going to do is recite the sequence and timing of events, and we've already discovered that doesn't come close to matching what you remember. And in my telling of my story, it may prompt you to remark on what your recollections are. Is it your memory A.V.... or when did you depart from WOSU?

Q. I think it was 1965. I'd have to check records.<sup>14</sup>

A. So you left after I did? I don't think so.

Q. When did you leave?

A. As I told you yesterday, September or August 1964.

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<sup>13</sup> Shirk note: According to Fred Calland's obituary in The Washington Post, 10/25/99, he was, "...music director of a Columbus station from 1955 to 1966."

<sup>14</sup> Shirk note: The records I was referring to are my Social Security records, which indicate that I worked at WOSU from 1960 to 1964.

- Q. I'll have to go back. The only records I actually have are pay records.
- A. That would be definitive.
- Q. But I'll have to go pull them. We have them somewhere back there in our house, but I'll have to pull them to determine. Actually, they are income tax records and what they show is a period when I wasn't paying into income tax.
- A. Social Security.
- Q. Yeah, Social Security, because WOSU, or Ohio State University, had an arrangement whereby you didn't have to do that. So that gap indicates pretty much when I was working at WOSU, but I'll have to go look it up.
- A. Well, I thought that you had vacated the premises before I did because I recall you cleaning out your office. A.V., I'm as certain as I can be, 50 years hence, that you departed WOSU shortly before I did, and my recollection is that it was in the aftermath of the "Songs of Protest."
- Q. Well, it was a distant aftermath because the "Songs of Protest" was in 1961.
- A. Well, see what a ruckus it was. Reverberations from that shot...
- Q. Now, you remember me cleaning out my office.
- A. I remember that the routine was different because you were doing stuff to depart. And when, if you'll forgive me A.V., your office, like Fred's, was overflowing with things, and needed to be sorted out and straightened up. That's one of my strongest memories about Fred's office.
- Q. Yeah, that's right.

- A. And I just remember that there were emotional, there was a set of emotions in the air about your departure that attaches to the image I have of hustling around, fussing around in an atmosphere of regret, and even anger.
- Q. Fred gave me a lot of stuff to take. I had, over the years at WOSU, I had recorded an awful lot of material. And he gave me the original tapes, in fact helped me carry them out to the car.
- A. Well, that's no doubt how I got the P.D. East tapes, with his leave to do so.
- Q. And I think he did this because he knew the tapes would have been recycled. Remember that big bulk tape eraser back in Bill Park's office?
- A. I do not remember that.
- Q. Big electro magnet, and you put the reel of tape on it, and turned it on and spun it around a couple of times. And that tape was *erased*.
- A. No, I don't remember that. But, I understand the impulse not to let either what I did or you did... I'm sorry, I don't have any tapes, if any were made, of a program of Panoply. I have recollections of interviewing two or three people from Algeria, when the Algerian revolt was going. And I would have liked to have had that.
- Q. You did a thing on [German Nazi leader Otto Adolf Eichmann], didn't you?
- A. I did? Oh yes, I did. Why did I do that? I know why I would do it but I don't how it fit in...
- Q. It was your program, Panoply wasn't?
- A. Yes, but...
- Q. Well, it was the Eichmann execution [in 1962].
- A. Oh, OK, yeah. Well...

- Q. Or the trial at any rate? Well, obviously the capture, the trial, or the execution...that attracted a lot of commentary. Isn't that when Hannah Arendt's "The Banality of Evil" came out? Yeah, there was a lot of commentary, and you contributed to it, I remember.
- A. And what happened? Was there any reaction to that?
- Q. Not that I recall, certainly no adverse reaction. I just happened to remember that one in particular.
- A. Well, gosh, A.V., thank you. That had gotten away from me entirely.
- Q. Did you do these live?
- A. Yeah.
- Q. Or did you have scripts?
- A. Oh, no. They were live.
- Q. Well, then there wouldn't be any recordings?
- A. There was the capacity to record while the program was going on.
- Q. There was but it wasn't policy to do so.
- A. Then I'll shift my focus of regret to, not that things were lost, but things were never found. Well, let's go back to the issue of ...
- Q. My God, if they recorded everything, it would be overflowing. And they didn't have the budget for tapes.
- A. You just said the remedy for that was this demagnetizing gizmo.
- Q. Yeah, we would record stuff using those big Magnacords and interviews, whatever, and when the show was done...
- A. Oh! A surge of memory. It may not fit into what we're talking about right now but it comes back. In 1960, there was an election campaign going on. And John Kennedy,

candidate, came to Columbus, and he spoke on the State House steps. They set up a platform. And Mike DeSalle was Governor. And I took on the role of newsman, and I got a press card. A WOSU press card. And went there. It took place in the evening, wonderful early fall evening. And there was a mob, a huge crowd, as I'm going to remember this, that filled up the front of the grounds of the State House. Between the State House and South High Street. And I got up, very close to the platform, because I had a press card. But the non-official or press people were crammed up there too, as I will detail in a minute. And I was carrying with me, as you may have noticed that I always do; one of the things that I've learned over the years is never to be without something to read.

Q. I remember you telling me that. "A.V., always have something to read with you."

A. And I'll expand that a little bit. Always have something... a writing implement and some paper.

Q. Yes, I've discovered that's a good idea too.

A. So I had an issue of the New Republic. I had it out. And Mike DeSalle was speaking; and he was a bore. I was looking at this. And from his place on the stage, John Kennedy did this: pointed at my magazine and did this.

Q. Well, tell the recording what you are doing. They can't see.

A. I'm flipping my hand. A gesture from Kennedy to me indicating he wanted to look at the magazine. So I stretch out over the lip of the stage and he came forward a little bit from his chair. Mike DeSalle is droning on and I gave it to him. And he read the damn thing while DeSalle was speaking. The better choice.

Q. DeSalle deserves a better characterization than you're giving him.

A. Well, anyhow.

Q. The thing is, you could get that close to a presidential candidate back then.

A. Well, yes, you can now but you'd likely be swatted. So when DeSalle was finished, and it was time for Kennedy to speak, he put the magazine down on the seat of the chair; got up and made his speech. And I'm beginning to fret. I want my damn magazine back. Behind me were some high school girls, and they saw that I had gotten real close and I don't know whether they were right behind me or...there were two or three tiers of people. But one of them handed me her little Brownie instamatic. It couldn't have been a camera much more than that. She handed it to me and wanted me to get closer and take pictures of Kennedy. So I did that. And I came back the next day to WOSU Radio, and was telling people what had happened, in the context of the big event, what my little part had been in it. And Gloria said—oh, oh yeah; all right, I forgot. So the speeches are over with, and backslapping, hand shaking, people leaving, and, my magazine, I don't have my magazine. So I get up on the stage, looking cross, and surging around trying to find my magazine. And some official type wanted to know what I was doing. And I told him I was looking for my magazine that I had loaned to Kennedy. (Scoffs) This was a matter of no importance...

Q. Which it wasn't, to them.

A. You think?

Q. Yeah.

A. Well he found my magazine and brought it to me in the spirit of, "Get lost, kid." This is, in the mighty current of history, this is not even a speck. Well, I got my magazine back. So I took it, I had it with me because I hadn't had a chance to read it as much as I wanted

to. I brought it back. I had the magazine with me the next morning. And I'm telling Gloria about this. And she said, "Oh, the magazine! I have to have it. He touched it. Did you get his autograph?" No, I'm not an autograph hound. He's just a presidential candidate. What do I care? Oh, yes! So I had the press card on the lapel of my jacket. And under it was a Stevenson button. I mean, inside; you flip over the lapel; and I felt so subversive. And she was distraught that I didn't get his signature.

Q. Seriously? She wasn't kidding?

A. It was a school girl gush reaction; and she didn't do that much.

Q. No, she didn't.

A. And I gave her the magazine.

Q. Well, that was very nice.

A. It was so important to her, that it had been touched by John Kennedy. Well.

Q. You were sent out to cover things?

A. No, I think I sort of sent myself out. "Don, give me a press card."

Q. Because I remember being sent out once or twice to cover things. And I can remember occasionally encountering – well, I had run into people who assumed that WOSU was the student station.

A. I make that distinction; I assert that very forcefully, when I'm with somebody, say in Oberlin or wherever it might be. I remark on working at The Ohio State Radio Station. *Not* the student station, *no*. This was WOSU AM/FM. This was a real radio station. Don't you let the idea that it was the geeky, goofy student station enter your mind.

- Q. Yeah, I encountered that from time to time. Getting back to Fred Calland, I remember a story, that, uh, do you remember any of the uproar or controversy when WOSU listeners learned that he was leaving?
- A. No, I don't. And I don't know when that was. You said earlier that it was well after you and I had gone.
- Q. Well, I don't know about you. It was after I was gone. I remember I was in Watertown, New York at the time. I was working as a commercial photographer.<sup>15</sup>
- A. That was a long time.
- Q. Yeah, that was a long time. But I don't know where I got this story, but I heard that after Fred left, immediately after Fred left, some people were calling in to complain about the quality of the music programming.
- A. Oh, after he left.
- Q. Yes, immediately.
- A. Well, they should.
- Q. Well no, for cryin' out loud, because he did it a month in advance, and so that music programming for the month that followed his departure, was his work. And people would call in, "Ah, now that Fred Calland is gone, the music quality is just awful." And they'd explain to them, "Look, this is his work. You're not helping by calling in."
- A. No, I don't remember any of that A.V.
- Q. I wonder where I got that; I wonder who...
- A. Not from me. You might have, but I have no recollection of it.
- Q. [Former WOSU Music Director] Mary Rousculp, maybe.

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<sup>15</sup> Shirk note: I was on assignment at Watertown; I didn't live there. By this time, I was living in Worthington.



A. Yeah. Yeah, she would have reason to be miffed at that. Well, it's astonishing to me, as you and I have been talking about this, to find that you remember, and you don't remember; and I remember, and I don't remember.

Q. At this point we should go out and watch, "Rashomon"<sup>16</sup>

A. (Laughs) It's just about 9:00. This is fun, A.V. I want to bring up more of this. So after we have breakfast, we should come back here and do more of the same before you leave.

Q. All right.

A. And I will try to latch onto some other bits of this marvelous history between the time you turn the recorder off and we're back here to turn it on again.

Q. Okay, well I'll shut it down for now.

Q. This is a continuation of the April 24<sup>th</sup> recording with David Sonner. We were talking about Fred Calland. He had a, I was going to say hands-off, but a non-existent supervisory style.

A. He would come in, when I say come in, I mean to the library, the long-playing record library, where I was located. And once in a while he would say something as a reprimand or as a suggestion that I do or not do. And a chiding from Fred was not, I took it, very often. I felt a deep stab of failure. And, I wanted to please him, especially on the occasions when he was expressing dissatisfaction with what I was doing. But except for that, now that I'm trying to bring all this back, his supervisory presence was not a heavy one. It occurs to me that he did scold me one time in a "Fredian" way. I don't know what the topic was or how I was expressing myself in some jejune way about a topic I can't bring back at all, but he said, "Don't scoff." And obviously that's stayed with me all this

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<sup>16</sup> Shirk note: One of Akira Kurosawa's best movies. It is about drastically different accounts from eyewitnesses to the same event.

time. OK, I'll try not to scoff, especially when I'm ignorant about what it is that I'm talking about, which was frequent.

Q. Yeah, I remember one time I disagreed strongly with him about something. I have no idea what. And at the upshot I just looked at him, and said, "God damn it, Fred, go fuck yourself." And he looked at me, and he smiled and he said, "Now, you're getting smart."

A. Meaning that you should be more assertive?

Q. I guess so. Because I was fairly deferential. And that kind of response is *very* rare for me.

A. Well, one thing I remember is that sometimes it was a happy arrangement that Fred was not in the office all the time, that there was a sense of ease and latitude and no heavy managerial pressure on you.<sup>17</sup> But then sometimes you needed him there. And he came and went on the basis that I could never quite, didn't know what to expect, whether Fred was going to be there or not. But even when he wasn't there, I retained the idea that he had kind of a loose, but still commanding, grip on things. Now does that correspond with you?

Q. Yeah.

A. Of course, once you leave here today, there will be a flood of things that I didn't remember, haven't remembered now.

Q. Write them down.

A. Write them down.

Okay, yeah, I know how to do that.

Q I do remember one thing. There was a sign in his office wall, "A clean desk is the sign of a frightened mind."

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<sup>17</sup> Shirk note: I never had that experience. I enjoyed Fred's company and always liked having him around.

- A. Well, he obviously, by that measure, was fearless.
- Q. And people would have to get into the station at odd hours for various things. And sometimes they would need keys to get into things. And so he had a set of keys for some of the places people might need to get into, high up on the corner, with a sign that said, "Secret hidden keys. Please return when done."
- A. Thank you. I do remember that. You had a key to the building?
- Q. Yeah.
- A. I had a key to the building.
- Q. We had keys to the building and all the studios. I doubt that I had keys to the managerial offices. But of course I never had the occasion to go in there alone. I'd go in there to talk to somebody.
- A. The door to the secretarial section of the managerial offices was open because the mimeograph machine was there.
- Q. Ah, yeah. And I must have had keys to the news department section because I would go in, sometimes I would show up very early in the morning to work occasionally before anybody else. I had some business over there. I have no idea what it was. But I remember going in there and I was the first one in the building, so I'd turn on the steam radiators.
- A. Oh, we recorded them.
- Q. What's this we business, paleface?
- A. What do you mean? I had a part in that.
- Q. Umm. Anyway, I listened to the steam radiators and they would bang and clatter and bang until they finally got working. Then for the rest of the day they worked very quietly. But they started off with this strange arhythmic banging. And one day I just listened to it,

and the next day I got one of the Magnacords and took it over there and just recorded it, about a half an hour of this stuff.

A. We broadcast that.

Q. Yeah, I edited it down and broadcast it as field recordings of ...

A. I thought it was an unaccompanied sonata for the steam radiator.

Q. No, I edited it down and broadcast it as field recordings of some island in the Caribbean where they had made an entire band of percussion instruments made from leftover oil drums from the World War II US military. I made up this island, even gave a location for it, and gave the whole thing, and then claimed these were old field recordings and broadcast it one day. It was an inside joke for an audience of one.

A. Well, no, I...

Q. OK, an audience of two.

A. I hope you still have that.

Q. I'm afraid I still do. I've given it to the OSU Archives, with some reluctance. My first impulse was to get rid of it, because it was such a silly thing to do. And it's not the sort of thing...

A. It was entirely in keeping with the spirit of the place. I remember a particular thing about Fred and about what we did in the way of broadcasting. At 6 pm, wasn't there a program every day, maybe not on the weekends, called "Interlude."

Q. Oh, yeah.

A. And Fred made up a word, an interlude of "lallorious" music.

Q. Yeah, it was supposed to be a calm, gentle, calming, after the hectic day, there was an interlude of quiet music.

- A. It was after the news, after the 5 or 6 news.
- Q. And, I remember... Well, Fred and I did the programming. And I programmed a lot of the music and I programmed some of the Interludes. Some of it was not, uh.... What was that word?
- A. Lalorious.
- Q. Some of the stuff I put in was not lalorious.
- A. We got away with some things. And I think in doing that we also showed some restraint. We didn't take our foolishness as far as we might have. I'd like to think some of it was inspired foolishness that had some value other than just spur-of-the-moment nonsense. Well, Fred has over these several decades remained an important personage, influence, mentor, hero.
- Q. Yeah.
- A. This is going to take a lot of editing because we're searching and struggling to try to come up with stuff on particular events and it's hard, at least for me, to express how constant Fred's influence, and how significant it's been in my life. I conjure up Fred and I talk to him and most of the time I'm apologetic. "Gee, Fred, I'm sorry I didn't do better for you." But also there are times when we just had fun. Fred was a boon companion.
- Q. Yeah.
- A. I was told, not by Fred, he never talked about it, but I was told that he was wounded in the Second World War; that he was in a transportation unit, is the way I'm going to spin this out. He was in a transportation unit and he was standing on one side of the truck, a

deuce and a half<sup>18</sup> probably, and a shell landed on the other side. And the shrapnel came under the truck and wounded him in the legs.

Q. No, I don't remember that.

A. Well, somebody, Fred, as I just remarked, didn't talk about being in the Army or any of the warfare stuff.

Q. I remember one thing, going to Fred, who spoke fluent German, and there was a German instruction program that was broadcast over WOSU, it was handled by a woman called Frau Ilsedore Edse, and occasionally Fred would go in with her and the two of them would do whatever the hell they did. I mean, I heard it but, of course, it meant nothing to me, because I spoke no German. I remember going to Fred once with a passage in German of some kind, a phrase or something I had encountered somewhere. And I gave it to him and asked him to tell me what it meant. And he looked at it and he said, "Hmmm, let me see, how would you say that in English?" I didn't know what he was talking about because I figured if you knew what it said in German, you would automatically know what it said in English. And it wasn't until *many* years later, when I started learning Spanish, that I realized that I could understand something in Spanish, but if I were called on to say it in English, I'd have to stop and think about it, because...

A. It's not a one-for-one.

Q. It certainly is not. But that time when he said, "How would you say that in English" was my first introduction to the complexities of language.

A. He was good with French and Italian. And, thinking of him in a different context, did you go to the play that he was in?

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<sup>18</sup> Shirk note: A deuce and a half is a 2 ½ ton truck.

Q. Gosh, no.

A. The Jean Giraudoux<sup>19</sup> play. In translation from French, “The War with Troy did not take place,”<sup>20</sup> and Fred was there. It was theatre in the round. It might have been over at the... Something having to do with the stadium, not out in the stadium, an enclosure someplace. And a theater in the round. So we were smack dab up against where the players were. And Fred was wearing, I think he was wearing a toga, and he was a good actor.

Q. I’m not surprised.

A. And I think that was the only play that I saw him in. A.V., I believe this has to do, what I’m going to say now, with OSU. Over the span that I worked at WOSU, there was a terrible earthquake in Iran. And lots of people were killed and hurt. And, I don’t know what prompted me to do this, but I decided to have a benefit, a folk music concert, a hootenanny. And this was to take place at the auditorium in what was then the Student Union on High Street. And it was promoted through WOSU. And you had to have a part somehow in gathering up and getting the players, the folk music people.

Q. Yeah.

A. And it was not a big success but I think we got \$400 to send to the, I’m going to call it the Iran Earthquake International Assistance Committee.

Q. Well, that would be more like four to six *thousand* dollars today<sup>21</sup>, so...

A. Umm. Well, anyhow, the, through some of the, now we would call it outreach, things that you and I did, brought the world into, and WOSU out into, the world. And didn’t you arrange for folk music recordings? Local talent?

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<sup>19</sup> Shirk note: This does not sound like what David is saying. I may have it wrong.

<sup>20</sup> Shirk note: “The War with Troy will not take place”

<sup>21</sup> Shirk note: Actually, about \$3,000.00

Q. Oh, yeah.

A. Or lack of talent?

Q. Yeah, I used to record local folk musicians who were performing at venues like the Sacred Mushroom, Larry's, places like that.

A. The what mushroom?

Q. Sacred Mushroom. Miles and Joan Gibbons<sup>22</sup>, yeah. And then I would broadcast the performances. I remember getting a phone call<sup>23</sup> from somebody who wanted to know if she could buy recordings of Jackie Tracey. And I said, "No, I'm sorry, she hasn't made any recordings." Those were among the recordings that Fred gave me and helped me carry out to my car. A lot of those things, the original tapes have been given to the Popular Culture Library at Bowling Green, and copies have been given to the OSU Archives and the Columbus Metropolitan Library History Division. And mostly I'm glad to get them out of my hands; because what's the executor of my estate going to do with them?

A. Yes, of course. All right, well, I'm not coming up with anything new.

Q. Alright, when you do come up with stuff new, would you write it down, make note of it. And if there's enough we can do this again. Otherwise, I'm going to...

A. Good excuse for you to come up here. I'll look around for what I keep telling you I have.

Q. The documents and the photos?

A. Yes.

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<sup>22</sup> Shirk note: "The Sacred Mushroom", run by Miles and Joan Gibbons, was a coffee house, on High Street, across from the old Student Union. Miles told me that it was named after the hallucinogenic mushrooms that were then popular in some circles.

<sup>23</sup> Shirk note: The call came in to WOSU.



Q. Please do. Thank you, David.

A. I thought I could come across the monthly bulletin that I've been cherishing. It was made on good paper, as you remember.

Q. Yeah, it was.

A. Over the past 50 years I've been able to summon the name of that at easy will, but now it won't show up.

Q. Okay, thank you very much.

A. You're welcome very much.